

THE
NATURE and NECESSITY
OF THE
NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST,
STATED and DESCRIBED,
ACCORDING TO
THE ART's EXPERIENCE and TRUE PRACTICE.

BY
JOANNA ELEONORA DE MERLAU.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,
By FRANCIS OKELY, A. B.
Formerly of ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE in CAMBRIDGE.

By it SHE being dead, yet speaketh. Heb. xi. 4.

——— Not that I incline
To pin my Faith on any one Divine;
But Man, or Woman, whose'er it be,
That speaks true Doctrine, is a Pope to me,
Where Truth alone is Interest and Aim,
Who would regard a Person or a Name?
Or in the Search of it impartial, scoff,
Or scorn the meanest Instrument thereof?

Dr. Byrom's Epistle to a Gentleman of the Temple.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the EDITOR;

And Sold by M. LEWIS, No. 1, in Pater-noster Row; also by J. LACY and
R. SMITH, at Northampton.

MDCCLXXII.

*The Gift of the Editor to
Samuel John Maud.*

THE

WATSON'S

OF THE

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

T H E
T R A N S L A T O R ' S
P R E F A C E.

IMmensely numerous are the religious publications of the present day; which are made for various ends, and drawn up in a studied and artificial manner, more according to the system each author happens to have been educated in, or may otherwise have imbibed and adopted, than real heart's knowledge. It would be easy to suppose, what experience attests, that the approving Reader's taste will correspond

A

to

li P R E F A C E.

to that of the Writer; and of consequence, that very few books of this sort will be rightly relished, but by the party, whose Shibboleth they speak, and tend to magnify and support.

The present piece will be destitute of this recommendation. It is of no party, as such, and yet of every party. God grant it may rather be accepted than rejected by them all. If a beautiful simplicity, pure zeal for genuine christianity, sound truth in the inward parts, and heart's experience, according to the word of God, can overbalance merely human considerations, and be any motive to such as are sincerely concerned to become the true followers of a crucified Jesus; I dare venture to presage a favourable reception amongst such; and to promise

mise them, that the following pages will afford a blessed opportunity of “examining
 “ themselves, whether they be in the
 “ faith; of proving their ownelves, and
 “ knowing, whether Jesus Christ be really
 “ in them; or, whether they are as yet
 “ reprobates;” or, in other words, counter-
 feit christians, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Jer. vi. 30.
 “ If our heart,” in this light, “ condemn
 “ us not, then have we confidence towards
 “ God: but if our heart condemn us, God
 “ is greater than our heart, and knoweth
 “ all things.” 1 John iii. 20, 21. In this
 latter alarming yet salutary state, what shall
 we do? Shall we change one form of
 delusion for another, and continue to hide
 ourselves from ourselves amidst that almost
 infinite variety, which, it is to be feared,
 Satan, as an angel of light, has in these
 last days of liberty furnished the world

with ; and all tending to persuade men, that, "they may be Christ's without having his Spirit?" Rom. viii. 9. (I mean in fact, for in explicit notion who dare assert this?) Shall we turn over the elaborate books, or ask counsel of the reputedly pious and learned, but really unexperienced doctors and teachers, whom our blessed Lord calls, "Blind leaders of the blind?" Matt. xv. 14. "who shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that are entering to go in?" chap. xxiii. 13. By no means; unless we chuse "to fall with them into the ditch;" and with them "to be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. viii. 11, 12. What shall we then do, under a suspense, and at a crisis so painful and important? Do, as St. Paul did,
" Confer

P R E F A C E. v

“ Confer not with flesh and blood ; but
“ be obedient to the heavenly visitation.”
Gal. i. 16. Acts xxvi. 19. Believe the
faithful and infallible inward teacher in
your own hearts. John xvi. 8. vi. 45.
1 John ii. 27. and in heart’s humble sub-
mission to the divine gracious reproof and
conviction, take the Publican’s words into
your mouth, in truth and righteousness,
“ God be merciful to me, a sinner ! ”
Luke xviii. 13. If your Saviour is not glad
“ to justify, and to save every lost sinner.”
chap. xix. 10. if he “ doth not love mercy,
“ rather than sacrifice.” Matt. ix. 13. if
there be no victory through the blood of
the Lamb. Rev. xii. 11. thy case is irre-
mediable. But if it “ be a true saying,
“ and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus
“ Christ came into the world to save sin-
“ ners ; yea, the chief of sinners,” 1 Tim.
i. 15.

i. 15. thy case is not only not desperate, but highly hopeful; and such scripture-declarations, often talked and perhaps preached on, but never truly felt and understood before, will give thee, by really believing them, a foundation and consolation the stranger intermeddleth not with.

Should then this little piece, in concurrence with the Spirit of truth from Jesus, prove the means of inducing any one irreligious profligate to become truly serious and religious; of disabusing and convincing any amongst the now so numerous false christians; and of bringing both, as living branches into Christ the true vine: Should any real member of his mystical body be hereby in any degree edified and confirmed; should one or all these blessed effects be obtained, I shall think myself
 amply

P R E F A C E. vii

amply rewarded for the small pains I have been at in its translation and publication.

Let me just observe, that I know no more of the Author, than that she appears to have been a Lady of some rank in life; and that she lived near a century since at Francfort on the Mayne: That a copy of this letter, transcribed by one J. Philip Dorre in 1741, came as a soiled manuscript into my hands, and in a way, I might think providential: That it has laid by me unnoticed for many years; but lately finding a desire to read, I was strongly inclined to translate and publish it.

Should the reader be, on any account whatsoever, disposed to slight what is here with a sincere intention offered for his soul's benefit;

viii P R E F A C E.

benefit; I have not the least right to complain. Every man has his taste, and I have mine. I profess myself only a learner in the school of God, and am desirous of assisting, and being assisted by my fellow-christians. And in regard to this, I am truly content to await the decision of the day, "which
" will try all things, and manifest the
" counsels of all hearts." 1 Cor. iii. 13. iv. 5. In the mean time, with reference to my Author, I only beg leave to suggest and leave the words of Jeremiah on my Reader's mind and conscience.

" The prophet, that hath a dream, let
" him tell a dream; and he that hath my
" word, let him speak my word faithfully:
" What is the chaff to the wheat, saith
" the Lord?" Jer. xxiii. 28.

T H E
N A T U R E and N E C E S S I T Y
O F T H E
N E W C R E A T U R E in C H R I S T
described, &c.

To my two dear and worthy Sisters, Christina Sibylla Maria Philippina, and Carolina Augustina Philippina, the grace of God, which is in Christ Jesus, and the power of his death and of his resurrection for the production of a New Creature; together with all the unsearchable riches, lying hid in him for time and eternity; are, with this letter, wished, by

Their faithful Sister,
Joanna Eleonora de Merlau.

I AM not unapprized, that you both heartily desire to be real partakers of your Saviour Jesus Christ; and through Him to obtain an access unto the Father. But I have through experience learnt, that we are not apt to take at once the shortest way to this; but often endeavour, by various exercises, and under divers forms, to get into this way of life. This the pre-
B cious

cious words of the dearest Saviour plainly evince; when he says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke xiii. 24. And again, "Strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. vii. 14.

Which words it very highly concerns us to lay to heart, and diligently to enquire, what may be the proper reason, "why so few find this narrow way;" and what that implies, "many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Notwithstanding that it is so clearly pointed out in the holy scriptures, and is in plain words as well as by parabolical expressions, testified of and set forth. Now, if we duly ponder Christ's words, and consider the difference there is between *striving* and *seeking* (to the former of which an entry into life is granted, and of the latter a total incapacity of attaining it is affirmed) then let us employ our utmost diligence, not only to investigate the real meaning of this truth, but also to reduce it to practice.

I must ingenuously own to my dear sisters, that this meaning of Christ, by his declaration here, remained a secret to me for a long time; and that as often as it recurred to memory, it was with great anguish of spirit; considering that *many* shall seek to enter in at the strait gate, which leadeth to life, and shall not be *able*: Yea, that there are but few, who find the narrow way to this gate. So that I have had many a conflict, and employed myself in much seeking and striving to find
out

out this narrow way; till at length the goodness of the most High preventing me, did open my understanding to discern, wherein the proper difference between the *seeking* and *striving* state lies. And I was hereby made acquainted, that all the exercises of godliness engaged in without putting off the old man, and putting on the new, are to no purpose: For instance, the going to public worship, praying, reading, and taking the sacrament, the giving of alms; the drawing up articles of faith according to the words of scripture; and the appropriating to ourselves all the benefits of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice; or, as the scripture in brief expresses it, "The having a form of knowledge, and " of the truth in the law," or in our bible. Rom. ii. 20. All this, my dear sisters, have I found in the seeking state; yea, more still, even divine contemplations, and a knowledge of the truth; all which Christ reckons as a part of seeking: The same which Paul also, through the Spirit of Christ, asserts, "If I had all knowledge, " and understood all mysteries, it might yet profit me " nothing." 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 3. For in the midst of all these things, in themselves good, one may still abide in his old nature, and submit to the ascendancy of its lusts, as every day's experience sufficiently evinces†. Whereas, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new " creature." 2 Cor. v. 17. Nor is any other thing,

B 2

but

† Were the Holy Ghost to shew the extent of the flesh's confidence, expressed by St. Paul, Phil. iii. 1. sqq. many a supposed christian society, and many a professor of christianity of the first rate, would have occasion to tremble. God grant then, that we may neither deceive our own selves, 1 Cor. iii. 18. vi. 9. nor be deceived by others. Matt. xxiv. 4. Rev. xii. 9. "Let us come to the light, that our deeds may be made manifest, that they " are wrought in God." John iii. 20, 21.

but such a new creature of avail in Christ. Whereby I have been taught by the Holy Ghost, that by the *striving* to enter in at the strait gate (of which strivers alone our Saviour asserts, that they enter into life) we are to understand precisely the mortification of the old man by the power of the death of Christ, in order to the resurrection of the new man, by the power of his resurrection.

And although this truth stands in the catechism, we are taught as children, and we learn the words thereof from our infancy, viz. ‘ That our old man must be ‘ drowned by daily remorse and repentance; and the ‘ new man come forth, which after God is created in ‘ true righteousness and holiness.’ Yet what Christ tells us remains nevertheless true, when he affirms, that *few* there be that find it, that is, the narrow way to life. It also verifies the testimony of the Holy Ghost by Paul; who in his epistles, speaking of the last times, declares, that “ they shall retain the form of godliness, “ or truth; but deny the power of it.” 2 Tim. iii. 5. Forasmuch as in the practice and course of our day, nothing less than this truth is found, viz. the man in Christ, or, the new creature; whereby, “ with open “ face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, “ we are changed into the same image from glory to “ glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor. iii. 18. Insomuch, “ that a man lives no more, but “ Jesus Christ lives in him.” Gal. ii. 20. as having died for him, and risen again to this very end. Rom. xiv. 9. Nay, in our day the way of life comes under an

an evil suspicion; so that every one, who only makes the first essay towards a godly life of this sort is immediately exposed to persecution. And although he injures no man in any respect, nay rather is disposed to do good to all men, to the utmost of his power; yet is he nevertheless more maligned and persecuted, than any the vilest miscreant (whom they notwithstanding indulge with civil liberties; yea, admit to baptism and the supper of the Lord; which yet they debar || him from, who is in good earnest about his salvation; rejecting him as a fanatic and enthusiast, who wants to introduce a new religion *. All which is an infallible proof, that the old man is not put off, nor the new man, which is able to judge and discern all things, put on. And yet from this old man it is, that all ignorance in spirituals arises; because "the natural man receiveth not the things of "the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto "him, neither can he know them." 1 Cor. ii. 14. For were the *one* put off, and the *other* put on, another sort of christianity would arise, no longer divided and subdivided into so many sects, as is now the case; but like the primitive christians, as one heart and one soul, it would again make its appearance in the world.

Is

|| The clergy abroad seem in this respect || to have more authority than ours in England.

* I heartily wish, that those persons, who are so glib at dubbing other people Enthusiasts, &c. might well consider what ground it springs from. There is undoubtedly such a thing as Enthusiasm, or a false pretence to inspiration. But must the abuse of any thing, destroy the reality of it? If so, farewell every thing that is sacred. I am bold to assert, that notwithstanding all abuses, if we are not found amongst some of the miscalled Enthusiasts of our day, we shall run a great hazard of not being owned by Christ, when he comes in his own glory and his Father's. Human reason is now strongly at war against superstition. May I be found at all events in the supposed enthusiastical mean between both these extremes!

Is it not true, dear sisters ! that this has given rise to the present divided state of Christendom ? People have endeavoured to secure their own salvation by *Articles* and *Forms*, drawn out of the scripture ; when one party has framed the scripture-words into this, and the other into another sense and form ; wrangling and damning one another without entering any of them into a close examination of themselves, how far they all live in the new creature. Had this been the main point of enquiry, in process of time there would have been no want of real and useful knowledge : For wheresoever Christ dwelleth, and in whomsoever he liveth, no unfruitfulness in all knowledge and purity will remain ; because, that “ in Him are hid all the “ treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” Col. ii. 3. and he discloseth them to such as are his friends, and do as he hath commanded them ; which is to put into practice the genuine self-denial ; which also consisteth in this very thing, viz. the putting off the old man with his deeds, and following the Saviour ; a thing quite impracticable without putting on the new man. But now notwithstanding all this, they will needs extort from merely natural men, that they shall comprehend articles of faith ; nay even compile and instruct others in them ; although the Holy Ghost has clearly told us, that it is a thing impracticable : For the natural man cannot so much as perceive the things of the Spirit of God, being foolishness unto him, nor can he comprehend them. Consequently a new spiritual man is to this end indispensibly requisite ; one who can
preach

preach the doctrines of faith in *power*; who, as a man of God, and a person regenerated, must endeavour first of all, by the power of God, to make of natural, spiritual men. In a word, he must go through Christ the door into the sheepfold; that the Holy Ghost, the porter may open to himself, before he can find an open door into the hearts of other men; and before he can challenge from them a right faith concerning Christ. Forasmuch as the acquiring knowledge and certain phraseologies, and the appropriating to ourselves the things, which are written concerning Christ, is not faith; but to possess substantially what the holy scripture testifies concerning Christ, is faith. Do I now find it testifying, that Christ is the Propitiation for our sins, and that he hath redeemed us from them? I must then in my own heart possess such a propitiation, and the efficacy of this redemption to such a degree, that what I am redeemed from must no longer be able to domineer over me; but I to rule and reign over it. Doth the scripture testify, that Christ hath died unto sin once? Then must I also be dead with him unto it; not in the imagination, but in reality. Is he risen again? Then must I be also risen with him, and seek those things only, which are above. Is he ascended up into heaven? I must also ascend with him, and have my conversation, or citizenship, in heaven. Is he, the Lord Christ, righteous? Then must I, by virtue of his righteousness wrought out in his own person, also work righteousness. And more especially do I yield myself up to an egregious delusion, should I presume, that because he is righteous, I may set it down to my
 own

own account, that I am righteous too*. No, no; through him, who hath been made unto me righteousness, I must also become righteous, and lay aside all unrighteousness, the offspring not of the new but of the old man. And where this hath not yet taken place, the man is not yet a partaker of, has no interest in Christ. In this case, he is Christ *for us* and exterior to us; but not yet Christ *in us*; whereas, without mincing the matter, *in him* we must be found. And although he did die for all the world ("for he is the propitiation not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2.) yet we believe nevertheless, according to the scriptures, that all men are not now *actually* saved; which would be a consequence inevitable, were it sufficient to have Christ only *for us*.

The having here a strong sensation, impression, or imagination, will in truth be of no avail to us; for it must be real: Otherwise such a sensation, impression, or imagination, will prove too ineffectual to overcome the world; according to the character given of faith in the scripture, "that it is our victory, that it overcometh the world." 1 John v. 4, 5. And can any faith subsist but in the new creature? Because "in Christ nothing availeth, but a new creature." Gal. vi. 15.

* This point has long been a bone of contention between christians. But may we not say, that God's imputation is always a real and immediate communication of righteousness? As surely, and in the same heart wherein one man's disobedience has made us sinners, does the obedience of one make us righteous. Rom. v. 19. It certainly is so; and then what our author alledges is only levelled at one of the most subtil and abominable abuses of God's grace, that satan ever instigated human nature to.

vi. 15. which is, with Paul, of the same import with
 “ the faith that worketh by love.” Gal. v. 6.

Wherefore when the holy scripture treats of faith, it means *the* faith, which is possessed by the new creature ; it being impossible for the old man to believe, as unbelief is his essential characteristic. *This* the sacraments also refer to and suppose, viz. baptism and the supper of the Lord ; for are we not baptized into the death of Christ, in order that the old man may abide in death, and a new Man come forth ? That, “ like
 “ as CHRIST was raised from the dead, so WE also
 “ should walk in newness of life.” Rom. vi. 4. Now, if baptism be the laver of regeneration, ought it not to be our grand pursuit to attain the end of it ? That we put on the new creature whereunto we are baptized ; and lay aside the old man, whom through baptism, we have delivered up unto death ? Without this effect, it will be said of our baptism what Paul says, Rom. ii. 25, 26. of circumcision, “ That to such as
 “ do not attain the end and design of that ordinance,
 “ their circumcision is made uncircumcision :” So will our baptism, if we do not attain the end and design of baptism, by putting off the old man and putting on the new, whereunto we are baptized ; be also not esteemed as christianity, but mere heathenism. The very same is the case with the Lord’s supper too ; which has been instituted and given us for a memorial, that we may
 “ shew forth the death of Christ,” not only with words, but also in *reality* and *power*. Now, this ordinance being instituted for the growth of the inward

man, that "Christ may dwell in us and we in him;" and being an immediate consequent upon baptism, wherein we are to put on the new Man; should we use it in the old man, in which we are alive and do his deeds; we then "eat and drink damnation, or a judgment to ourselves." 1 Cor. xi. 29. For Christ came into the world for judgment to the old man; that, as the seat of the devil's works, it might be destroyed. 1 John iii. 8. For as Christ operateth in the new creature to produce the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God; so on the other hand doth the devil actuate the old man to produce his works therein. And the works of the flesh are manifest; for as the tree is known by its fruit, so are the old and the new man distinguishable by their several deeds. See, my beloved sisters! I have here, according to the measure of grace in utterance, given unto me, wished to shew you the difference between the *seeking* and the *striving* for an entrance into life; and have evinced the truth of Christ's words, that such as *seek* after it only in *this way*, will not be *able* to compass it. Because all outward exercises, such as the attending on public worship, taking the sacrament, fasting, praying, &c. are things which may be done without putting off the old man; which ought however to be performed and effected by *striving* alone; through which, by the death of the old man, we press through all obstacles into the life of the New. For *then* all such exercises as reading, praying, giving alms, &c. and all other good works, are profitable and acceptable to Almighty God.

Herein

Herein has also the parable of the wise and foolish virgins its ground and reality. Matt. xxv. For whereas it is said, that the foolish virgins took pains to go out to meet the Bridegroom, and to trim their lamps; this implies in the first point of comparison and resemblance, the very same as *seeking*. We may take the lamps for the external worship of God; but the vessels filled with oil, which the wise take with them, intimates the *striving* of the new Creature, which has no lack at all: And although a drowsiness may steal upon the truly godly, yet are they possessed of a constant and habitual readiness; so as immediately on the Bridegroom's voice to be in a capacity of obtaining an admission. Whereas the rest, who had always carelessly an entire dependence on others, without the substance of the holy unction in themselves, come too late for admission, and cannot procure it; being repulsed, as those that had neglected to become new creatures; without which in Christ nothing is of any avail. They hoped indeed to have gained admission, because they knocked and said, "Lord, Lord, open unto us;" but they obtained it not. The same is intended by the similitude proposed, Matt. vii. 24. sqq. Concerning the foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the wise man who built his on a rock. For the Fabric on the sand exhibits just the thing in the first point of resemblance, spoken concerning the *seeking* state, viz. that by all the exercises above mentioned, we get the credit and appearance of godliness, in the same manner as the house built on the sand has the form of a proper house, being for all that a groundless fabric, an house without

a foundation ; which by descending rains, rising floods and boisterous winds, may be thrown down and demolished. For instance, suppose we have acquired an habit of meekness and affability, and yet are not dead to the old man ; let but a small blast of human words of an irritating nature come suddenly upon us, and it is capable of demolishing this whole fabric and bringing us into such a chafe and perturbation, as if we had neither heard of, nor acquired any meekness and affability. But this is not the case with the fabric built on the rock, which has a stable foundation and bears an analogy to *striving* : where the sandy bottom of the old nature, being dug and cleared away, the building rests upon Christ the Rock of life, through whom we are become new creatures ; so that HE is our inward life, and WE in him are transformed into his own Image, as in the second Adam. Now the fabric, supported by this foundation, is impregnable and immoveable ; and the virtues built on such a bottom are divine virtues, which we are to shew forth, being merely the instruments of what the Spirit worketh in us ; which is the very nature of a fabric, that neither fire consumes, nor winds and inundations sap and throw down ; nay, it is rendered more firm and stable. For should any incident surprize a person who is a new creature in Christ, he maintains his ground and manifests his meekness in power : And the more the assaults of the enemy, represented by floods and winds, advance against him ; so much the stronger he becomes through the conflict in suppressing the old man, rising like a whirlwind ; who will not fail to exert his utmost power

power on those escaped from him into Christ; though all to no purpose, because not knowledge only, but deed also is ready to receive him. And therefore all virtues are stable in him, which in others not truly found in Christ, having all their ground in notional faith, are so far from being ready at any exigency of action and trial, that then we live and act diametrically opposite to the very things we however profess in words. And were we to expostulate with such as thus think one way and live another, they would immediately rejoin and tell you, 'O we are weak human creatures! we are incapable of doing it. And such as conceit themselves to do it, are only inflated saints, &c.' Nay, they go so far as to bless themselves, because they ascribe honour to Christ, and confess themselves in fact to be so very weak: And they censure others who labour after a good conversation in truth, as proud Pharisees, going about to establish their own righteousness, and wanting to be saved by their own works.

To such a pitch, dearest sisters! has the devil brought matters, that God's truth is misunderstood and very grossly misapplied. For, whereas man, under the knowledge of his being a weak and worthless creature, without the ability so much as to think a good thought, much less to speak, and least of all to do a good act; is forced to resign all claim to the promised salvation (forasmuch as without doing the will of God none can be saved. Matt. vii. 21.) And whereas man for this very reason, because he is by
nature

nature in a plight so wretched, ought to fly to Jesus Christ, that in HIM he might become a new creature (whereby he might afterwards be a match for every thing, and be released by Jesus Christ from the old nature, which in divine matters is so incompetent) yet man for all this remains out of Christ, retaining and hugging his sinful weakness, and never attaining to a victory in and through Christ. Think only, how detestible a thing it is, that the old man would fain do honour to Christ, by retaining as it were his old slough, and continuing in sins with the praises of the atonement in his mouth ! Whereas the Lord Jesus Christ is hereby dishonoured to the highest degree, because his precious atonement is invalidated and rendered so ineffectual as not ACTUALLY to redeem us from sin, but only to bear the *name* of doing it. But a man, renewed in Jesus Christ, knows and feels that he is ACTUALLY redeemed ; and yet does not glory in himself, but his glory is in the Lord Christ. And when he proves by his own example, that there is a *reality* in such redemption, he does not do his good works by way of ostentation, like those who still live in the old man ; but doth such works as Jesus worketh in him to the glory of the heavenly Father. Wherefore neither doth he attribute them to himself, as seeking honour from men ; but he seeks it from God only, merely wishing that the name of God may through him be glorified. And should he remonstrate against his neighbour's perversion of divine things, his aim thereby is not to exalt and make himself respectable ; but being cordially affected towards the other's salvation, would

would fain have him also come to the real knowledge of the truth. But *this* the natural man comprehendeth not, all the saving doctrines of Christ being folly to him. He cannot comprehend them, because they are diametrically opposite to his depraved reason, and appear to him in a light so nonsensical, that he even makes them matter of his banter and ridicule. And yet at the same time he adopts the words thereof, as articles of his faith; and with his mouth professes them to be the words of God, whilst he is vilifying them in fact: A procedure this that would be incredible, had not the Holy Ghost forewarned us, that the things of the Spirit of God would in their practice and substance be mere nonsense and folly to the natural man; the words of which natural men pronounce and confess, but deny their meaning and power.

Our conviction of this ought to stimulate us to strive, that we may obtain. And therefore, according to my small ability, I will suggest to you what has been of use to me in this respect. Not, my dear sisters! "as though I count I had already attained, either were I already perfect;" But all I say is, that with Paul, "I forget those things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things that are before, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 12, 13. I have in fact and by experience found, that I must devote my entire will to God. For, whereas through the fall of man I departed with my will from God; so must I return again by the conversion of my entire will to God.

For

For so long as we keep any view whatsoever in reserve to ourselves, it is impossible fully to arrive at this. Every one that makes the experiment will find, that no quality of birth, nor any situation in life can obstruct our becoming true disciples and followers of Christ, and consequently new creatures in Christ; provided we do but abandon every view to men, and the reflection upon other creatures. But so long as we retain and foster any such view, we shall not become pure and entire; but, like a blind man groping in the dark, shall abide under perpetual scruples, and arrive at no divine assurance and satisfaction; "we shall be ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Tim. iii. 7. Like a man trying to climb an high hill of sand, having almost gained the summit with extreme difficulty; the ground sinks under him, and he slides down again from top to bottom. For though something may with extreme difficulty be surmounted; yet, if our own views be not dead, we may by one or another occasion be drawn away and hurried back again; insomuch that all the pains we have put ourselves to, without a true purity of intention, may prove abortive. This has been my own sad experience. Before I was got above human views and considerations, how many tears have I shed; sometimes imagining the fault lay on my being born of quality, which would not admit of my becoming a simple and thorough follower of Christ; and at other times it seemed to me as though it were owing to the place I lived in. However the Lord commiserating my unhappy condition, opened my understanding, so that I could

could discern and acknowledge, that nothing but *human views* were my hinderance, and that I was loth to bear the reproach of Christ. John v. 44. vii. 6, 7, 48. But no sooner, under this fight and with God's grace, did I fix the resolution of walking in all simplicity, according to the word and pattern of my Lord Jesus Christ; but it happily ended in my salvation: So that now "I know in whom I believe;" and can say, according to my measure with Paul, "I believe, and therefore speak." 2 Cor. iv. 13. And although since the time of my having formed such a resolution in the Lord, and put it, by his power, into practice; I have been obliged to undergo many a trial, and have by manifold "experience got my senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Heb. v. 14. Yet I can affirm, that from that very hour the Lord has been with me, shewing the utmost patience towards me; bearing with my ignorance and untowardness in divine things; enlightening me more and more with the light of life; working in me genuine heart's humility, through his holy forgiveness; and afterwards opening to me, from time to time, many mysteries and promises concerning events to come: thereby strengthening me for my spiritual welfare, and instigating me unto true godliness. Amidst all which I never forgot, that "whosoever would have such an hope in him, ought to purify himself, even as he is pure." 1 John iii. 3. And because I met with frequent occasion of being made sensible of my own impotency by his forgiveness, and in the experience, that "without him I could absolutely do nothing." John xv. 5. So he thereby

preserved me from being puffed up in reference to my neighbour, whom I pitied ; owning that I had nothing of myself, but was solely “ by the grace of God “ what I was.” 1 Cor. xv. 10. and at length I came so far as to relinquish all self-assuming in divine things ; only wishing incessantly that I might be a serviceable instrument to my faithful Creator ; an instrument, that takes as little to itself of what HE effects by it ; as any earthen vessel in the potter’s hand, who forms it to his own ends, assumes any thing to itself. Under such subjection hath my God exercised me a while, till at length I came into the possession of his peace, and descried many depths in his incomprehensible ways and unsearchable judgments ; and thus “ have “ known him that is from the beginning.” 1 John ii. 14. Infomuch that no *occasion of stumbling* is any longer in my way ; but every thing tends to forward me to his glory.

Yet must I notwithstanding never be at a stand, but grow and advance in the inward man, and keep upon my guard, that the old man may never cajole and draw me into any defilement ; consequently “ am to keep “ myself in the power of God, that that wicked one “ may not touch me.” 1 John v. 18. Which then, dearest sisters ! is another thing I would recommend to you. I mean, that having sincerely devoted your whole wills to God, and got all bye-views under your feet ; you then take Christ’s exhortation to yourselves, when he says, “ Watch and pray.” One does not at first discern the importance of this : for it being
directly

directly perceptible that no outward watching can be hereby understood; and every man from his infancy growing up in inattention to, and an almost total ignorance of his heart, so as to pay no regard to its stirrings and movings; or operations; hence it comes to pass, that a man is plunged into one or another vice, before he is aware. This we see in David, who ascribes it to grace that he had found his heart. "Lord, says he, thy servant has found his heart.*" 2 Sam. vii. 27. For, till we have found our heart, no *watching* can properly take place; because that, "which defileth a man, cometh forth from the heart." Matt. xv. 18. But so long as a man is unacquainted with his own heart (which, on account of dissipation and distraction, he hath not yet truly found) neither can he discern and distinguish its stirrings and movings. Wherefore we must by the grace of God take good heed to habituate ourselves to abide at home within our own hearts, and take due cognizance of what passeth there; which is precisely what our Saviour means by *watching*. Now when we perceive by various incidental occasions, that wrath, hatred, self-complacency, self-love and the like, will be springing up out of the heart (which indeed the enemy stirs up, but is permitted by God for our good; that we may be able to discern the old man, and learn to mortify him in his power) we must then be roused up to prayer in order to supplicate strength from on high to get this old man out of the heart, and that Christ may be truly formed in us. For

D 2

although

* This is Luther's version; in ours it runs thus, "found in his heart."
In the Hebrew it is "found with his heart, &c."

although we never, through the whole course of our lives, can sit down in security, and therefore must never dismiss and remit our *watching* and *praying*; yet may we nevertheless by degrees, and through various exercises and experience, arrive through God's grace to such a state, that the old man is no longer able to domineer over us; rather that we enjoy the Presence of Christ to such a degree, that we have a great confidence in our heart towards God, and are filled with all kinds of divine knowledge, unto all the fulness of God; and can grow up "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. iv. 13. We may become temples of God and Christ, wherein the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost resideth, walketh, teacheth, testifieth, and discloseth one depth after the other, according to the good pleasure of his own will. Thus one goes on from glory to glory, and our *watch* on the whole grows easier and easier; because we are standing in the power of God, and have the stirrings and movings of the heart under controul and command, being habituated with Jacob to the staying at home, to the being turned inward, and not roving abroad like Esau, Gen. xxv. 27. And thus it must also be amidst a multiplicity of external employments, against the accumulation and oppression of which we must however be on our guard, lest they dissipate, distract, and decoy us out of our fortress. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. We have in the state above described all proper liberty, because we use every thing with a pure heart. But since all things are not expedient, and may even frequently prove a stumbling block to the weak; therefore we disclaim every privilege

privilege, which is not for edification. And here we begin to discern how great and extensive our privileges are, and how true that scripture is, that "godliness" has the promise of the life that now is and of that "which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8. For as soon as a person can in truth make use of all things, as if he used them not, not suffering his heart to cleave to any of them; then the heavenly Father loves to give him joy, and with pleasure to satisfy him, even in temporals; so that he obtains these things into the bargain: And when others, incapable of standing the test, often eat the bread of carefulness and sorrow, these get theirs as it were in sleep, and taste a blessing in all things; which they however possess, as if they possessed them not. Because they do not regard them as their own property; but only as a trust reposed in them, to be employed in the way the Giver of all good things shall best approve and point out. And even though they know that "all things are theirs, whether things present or things to come." 1 Cor. iii. 21. ad fin. yet do "they not abuse them." vii. 31. "by loving the world or the things in the world." 1 John ii. 15. but loving the creature in God, as God's creation and handy-work, praising and adoring him for it. Then in the place of former repinings, nothing but thanksgivings succeed: In the place of disquietude, quietness, and assurance; and instead of the horrible apprehensions of things that are to come; which might well make mens hearts to fail in them for fear and dread, comfort and confidence in God, because their redemption draweth nigh. We are satisfied, that the Lord will then
shelter

shelter and protect his own; nay, that " he will
 " spare them, as a man spareth his own son that
 " serveth him." Malach. iii. 17. And " before the
 " earth be destroyed, and the hour of temptation comes
 " upon the face of the whole earth." 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11.
 Rev. iii. 10. " They shall be sealed with the seal of
 " the living God." Rev. vii. They shall eat when
 others hunger; drink, when others thirst; " sing for
 " joy of heart, when others cry and howl for sorrow
 " of heart; and shall also in the days of famine be
 " satisfied : " And after being perfected in this taber-
 nacle of the body, shall either by martyrdom (for
 which God has imparted sufficient strength unto them)
 or in some other way, bid adieu to this world, and receive
 a " glorious kingdom and a diadem of beauty from the
 " hand of the Lord ; " and shall commence a never end-
 ing felicity, " the second death having no power over
 " them; being partakers of the first resurrection, and
 " as priests of God and Christ, sitting on the throne,
 " and reigning with Christ a thousand years." Rev.
 xx. yea, from eternity to eternity. This is in very
 deed " the promise of the life which now is, and of
 " that which is to come." And although it be not
 immediately bestowed, do not on that account despond;
 seeing victory must precede the enjoyment of the pro-
 mises. " The striving against sin." Heb. xii. 4. and
 " the good fight of faith " 2 Tim. iv. 7. are first in
 order; for as we are to strive against sin to subjugate
 or bring under the old man; so must we also " con-
 " tend earnestly for the faith which was once given to
 " the saints," Jude 3. that in this faith we may go
 on

on "conquering and to conquer." But first of all it must suffice us to do good, because it is the will of God, and we afterwards discern how good that will is; yea, that all God's commandments are lovely, and not grievous: Inasmuch that the performing God's commandments is a real self-gratification, being thereby exempted from every thing that can annoy and hurt us. Consequently by being DOERS we learn by the clearest and most natural evidence of our own experience, that the love of God has issued out no other commandments than such as constitute the happiness of mankind; nor any other prohibitions than from such things as are detrimental and afflictive both to their souls and bodies. Thus in such a "deed we are blessed." James i. 25. and can have a right knowledge by our own experience, that the God, who seeks our salvation and well-being in every thing to such a degree, must needs be *love* itself. 1 John iv. 8, 16. But where *deed* is wanting, and we are unconcerned to advance any further than to notional knowledge; buoying ourselves up with a false imagination and taking it for granted we are christians, and so ought to appropriate Christ and his righteousness (as we commonly speak) to ourselves; we shall for all that discover, that we were nothing more than heathens. For what though we did not worship stocks and stones; yet we loved and were more addicted to sensual pleasures than to God; and were in various ways wholly attached and devoted to the things of the world. And at the last day, if we continue in the old nature, we shall have far more to answer for (as having pro-

fessed

fessed ourselves christians, and been really heathens ;
 as having confessed the scriptures, and yet lived counter
 to them) than they who were outwardly heathens,
 and had no means of knowing the will of God, as we
 had. Neither will it be of the least avail here to any
 person, that he was received into this or the other
 church ; which presumed they had the genuine faith,
 because their doctrines of faith were taken in the pu-
 rest and most sincere manner from the scripture : No,
 no ; this will be the question, How such a one con-
 verted it into life ? whether such boasted purity of
 doctrine led him to purity of life, and made him a new
 creature in Christ Jesus ? so that he can say with Paul,
 “ I live not, but Christ liveth in me.” Gal. ii. 20.
 Such a one does indeed not come into judgment,
 neither does he die ; but passeth out of this mortality
 into life ; and upon the demolition of this earthly ta-
 bernacle obtains a building from heaven, a glorified
 body according to the likeness of Christ’s glorious
 body. Lo ! such is our hope towards him ; and
 moreover, as long as we are here on our pilgrimage to
 the Lord, “ are persuaded that neither things present,
 “ nor things to come shall ever separate us from the
 “ love of God.” Rom. viii. 38, 39. Hallelujah !

THIS, my dearest sisters ! is what I had in my
 heart to propose to you, when I parted and took leave
 of you as to bodily presence. But may the God of
 all fidelity, who is able to preserve you from this
 wicked world, and to impart all the riches of his
 divine knowledge unto you ; so as to outstrip me far,
 and

and get an image of Christ formed in your own hearts far more complete than any representation, I (according to my measure) may be able to make of it : May this faithful God be gracious unto you ; and lift up the light of his countenance upon you ; that in these last days, when both the hour of temptation and the sealing of his faithful ones is approaching,* you may stand your ground, and obtain his divine seal. For this I bow my knees in his presence, promising myself a favourable answer ; and that in his own good time we may meet and embrace each other before the throne of God and the Lamb : Not only as having been begotten by one and the same earthly Father, and born of one and the same earthly mother ; but also as having been begotten and born of God and of the heavenly Jerusalem. So run then, dearest sisters ! that ye may obtain. And be you hereby, from the very bottom of my heart, commended to the Love Eternal, by your faithful sister,

Joanna Eleonora (de Merlau)

Countess of
Asseburgh.

P. S. I heartily salute my dear brother, begotten of the same bodily Father, but not born of the same mother with myself. I wish him the birth from above, and that therein we may become near to each other, and be found under one heart. May the Lord teach him to know, that not *many* noble are called ; to the end he may be found amongst the *few*, which are ; and who have devoted themselves to God in Christ Jesus, and kept themselves unspotted from the world ! Amen.

F I N I S.

* What we love we wish for, and are but too apt to be unduly precipitant in our expectations of. This has been truly the case with respect to our dear Lord's coming, from the apostles down to the present day. The uncertainty of the time has infinite wisdom in it, to keep us *always* on the watch. See the following passages, 1 Cor. i. 7. Phil. iii. 20. iv. 5. 1 Thess. i. 10. 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2. 2 Tim. iv. 8. James v. 7, 8, 9. 1 John ii. 28. Rev. xxii. 20. But the Lord will surely come in the fulness of time, Luke xviii. 7, 8. Acts i. 11.

ERRATUM. Page 9, line 9. for MERLAN read MERLAU.

E

Turn over

Lately published,

In a very beautiful Twelves Edition,
For the Use of Schools, and the Admirers of *sacred*
Greek Poetry, in all Variety of Metres.

Price Five Shillings in Boards.

PSALMORUM aliquot Davidis Metaphrasis
Græca JOANNIS SERRANI, et Preca-
tiones ejusdem Græcolatinæ.

Appendicis Loco accessere HEN. STEPHANI,
LAUR. RHODOMANI, atque Græcorum
quorundam LYRICORUM Poëmata *Sacra*.

Edidit atque Interpretatione & simul Latinâ donavit

FRANCISCUS OKELY, A. B.

LONDINI: Excudebant G. BOWYER et J. NICHOLS,
Sumptibus Editoris.

Prostant venales apud ROBINSON & ROBERTS,
Pater-Noster-Row; & apud E. & C. DILLY, in the
Poultry. Apud J. LACY ac R. SMITH, Northamp-
toniæ; & R. WILCOX, Torcestriæ.



Notice!

The pious Learned Dr. Peter
Superintendent of Lunenburg
wrote a long letter to certain
Divines concerning the Question
"Whether God since Christ's
ascension, doth any more reveal
himself to mankind by the means
of Divine apparitions?" — He
also in the same letter gave an
exact account of what God
— bestowed upon that Noble
Maid, Joanna Eleonora, (Countess
of Asseburg) from her seventh
Year untill 1691 (that is from
1679) This said letter was translated
& published in English 1695 by that
most learned Physician to the
King — Francis Lee, who by the
request of Peter the Great wrote
"Proposals for the right framing
of his Government."

I. P. has the Letter above mentioned